

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

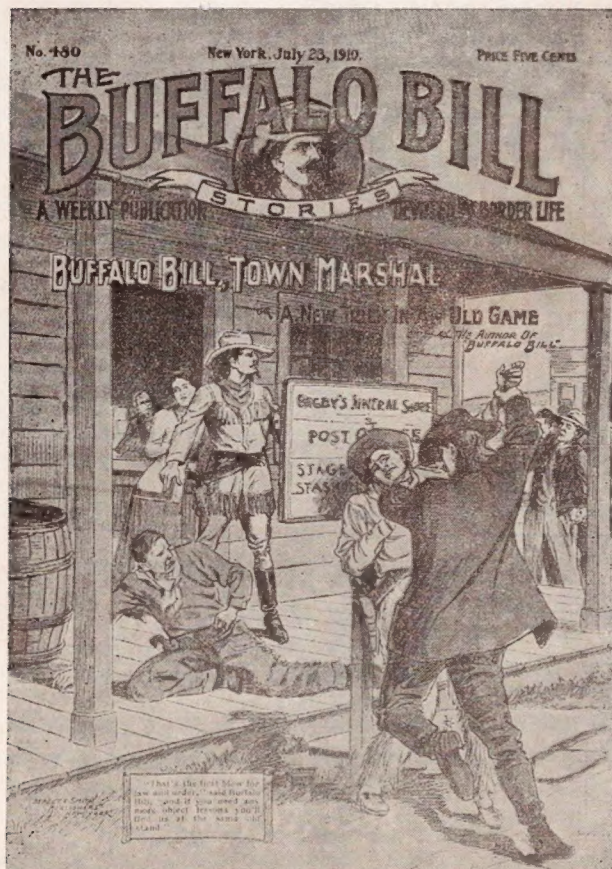
Vol. 26 No. 5

May 15, 1958

Whole No. 308

"By the Author of 'Buffalo Bill'"

by J. Edward Leithead



Cover of the long lived Buffalo Bill Stories.
(From the Charles Duprez collection of Dime Novel pictures)

"By the Author of 'Buffalo Bill'"

by J. Edward Leithead

Of all the many tales of Buffalo Bill, either in magazine or book format, published by Street & Smith, only a scant few were signed by the actual author; usually the anonymity of "By the Author of 'Buffalo Bill,'" concealed the writer's identity. The "scant few", signed by Col. Prentiss Ingraham, were issued in the 15-cent paperback series Buffalo Bill Border Stories, #1, Buffalo Bill, the Border King, #2, Buffalo Bill's Raid, (#3 was by Robert Russell with Ingraham's name on it), #4, Buffalo Bill's Trump Card, #5, Buffalo Bill's Pledge, #6, Buffalo Bill's Vengeance, and roughly, say, 68 others in the series.

Although Ingraham's name appeared as author on all 211 books in this series, he had written not more than a total of 73. The writers who never received credit for the balance of 138 stories were Ned Buntline, Julius Warren Lewis, Robert Russell, Harry St. George Rathborne, Laurana W. Sheldon, W. Bert Foster, John H. Whitson. There may have been another writer or two whose names I haven't been able to bring to light.

In a previous 15-cent book series, The Far West Library, launched by Street & Smith in 1907, the same number, 211, of identical books, except for the difference in titles on

#27 through #43 and a different arrangement in the order of the titles throughout, had appeared with authorship assigned to "By the Author of 'Buffalo Bill'" (which could have been Ned Buntline, who wrote only 5 novels about Cody, anyway, and 1 Buffalo Bill melodrama, "The Scouts of the Plains"), from #1 to about #85. With Far West #86, the pseudonym "Howard W. Erwin" replaced "By the Author of", and was used to the end of the Far West series. "Erwin," of course, was simply an anonym covering Ingraham, Buntline, Foster, et al.

About Buntline's 5 "Buffalo Bills": one was the first ever written about the scout and plainsman, "Buffalo Bill, the King of Border Men," serialized in the New York Weekly, 1869 which was more of a Civil War yarn than one of the Western border, nothing mentioned about buffalo hunting and the like.

Next was the New York Weekly serial, "Buffalo Bill's Best Shot, or, The Heart of Spotted Tail," reprinted as #127, Log Cabin Library, reprinted again in pocket Log Cabin, condensed version reprinted as #2, Buffalo Bill Stories, 1901, reprinted unabridged #2, Far West Library, 1907, title "Buffalo Bill's Bid For Fame," reprinted as before #39, Buf-

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falo Bill Border Stories and #27, Great Western.

Followed, in New York Weekly, "Buffalo Bill's Last Victory, or, Dove Eye, the Lodge Queen," reprinted in #128, Log Cabin, repeated as #386, Log Cabin, condensed version reprinted #3, Buffalo Bill Stories, "Buffalo Bill's Victory," then, I believe, combined with "Buffalo Bill's Best Shot" in the 15-cent Far West, Border Stories and Great Western printings of "Buffalo Bill's Bid for Fame," for Dove Eye, the Indian girl, is in this book, and she was "the heart of Spotted Tail," her father, a very real and prominent Sioux chief, who at one time traveled with Pawnee Bill's Historic Wild West.

The fourth Buntline was #102 of DeWitt's Ten Cent Romances, "Texas Jack, or, Buffalo Bill's Brother" and signed "By 'Lone Star'."

Lastly, Beadle's Dime Library #517 "Buffalo Bill's First Trail, or, Will Cody, the Pony Express Rider" (which retained its original volume number 40, consecutive number 517 and date of publication, Sept. 19, 1888 when reprinted, the only change being to substitute the name of M. J. Ivers & Co. for Beadle). In this story, Cody is a Pony rider but Eighteen years old, and by then The Pony had surrendered to Western Union. Frank Powell is in the story, also a young fellow. Most of it is fiction, though some facts about the Pony Express and Bill's boyhood.

Of the Buffalo Bill tales published in the 15-cent Great Western Library, alternating with reprints from Diamond Dick, Jr. Weekly for a score of issues, all were signed by Col. Prentiss Ingraham, as in the case of the Border Stories, whether he had written them or not; but at least this third series of Buffalo Bill reprints had some new and very attractive covers to recommend it. This time the series did not reach the usual 211-mark but folded with #156, "Buffalo Bill and the Klan of Kan."

Of course, as the readers of Dime Novel Roundup know, all these stories in the 15-cent series had first been printed elsewhere in Beadle's

Dime and Half Dime Libraries, Log Cabin Library, New York Weekly, but principally they were from Street & Smith's own color cover weekly started in 1901, the highly successful Buffalo Bill Stories. It ran to #591 issues, in the beginning and toward the end—#552 and later—using some reprint material.

Here again, the dime novel reader who wanted to know the writer was baffled by that anonymous "By the Author of 'Buffalo Bill'". And not once, in all the long life of that weekly was there ever a hint of who any of the authors actually were. Not in the novels themselves, at any rate.

Until recently I was never at all sure of the source of Buffalo Bill Stories #1, "Buffalo Bill, the Border King. A Story of Daring Deeds." Lots of the stories I could track back to their original vehicle of publication, but not that one. There was a "Buffalo Bill, the Border King, or, The White Queen of the Sioux and the Girl Rifle-shot" by "E. W. Wheeler" (Robert Russell) published as #152 of the Log Cabin Library, repeated in #392, same library, reprinted as Far West #5 under the title, "Buffalo Bill's Comrades." But this was not "the Border King" printed in 1901 as #1, Buffalo Bill Stories, and I began to accept it as a yarn either by Robert Russell or Harry St. George Rathborne, serialized, perhaps, in the New York Weekly but never reprinted in Log Cabin as were 2 Ned Buntline, 2 Robert Russell and 3 St. George Rathborne "Buffalo Bills."

Don Russell, who is editor of the Westerners Brand Book, a Buffalo Bill authority, and engaged in writing what will be the definitive biography of William F. Cody (Mr. Russell also prints kind notices of Dime Novel Roundup items in his excellent magazine)—well, he and I have been working together on the dime novel angle of Buffalo Bill's career, a part of the scout, buffalo hunter and showman's life which previous biographers have handled lamely because they lacked any but the most superficial knowledge of this angle.

We discussed the probable author of this first issue of the first color cover Buffalo Bill weekly, taking into consideration that the story had been reprinted in 1907 as #1 Far West Library, with additional material extending it from 5c to 15c size. In the transition to a 15-center the story had retained "the Border King" title, with sub-title, "Redskin and Cowboy," even holding this double title intact through a re-issue as Border Stories #1 and Great Western #40. I remarked to Mr. Russell, whose knowledge of the life and times of W. F. Cody is amazing, that "Redskin and Cowboy" was hardly a suitable sub-title, since there wasn't a single cowboy in the story, although plenty of Indians, scouts, U. S. cavalrymen and outlaws. He replied, "Back in the times of President Arthur 'cowboy' virtually meant a bandit—the good President so uses it in one of his annual messages. It was Buffalo Bill's Wild West that made the cowboy a hero. So the cowboy (in the title) obviously is the villainous Boyd Bennett." Leader of the outlaw gang in this tale is Bennett.

(to be continued)

ORCHIDS TO OUR DEPARTED BROTHER

It is my sad lot to inform the Brotherhood about the passing of one of our very popular members, good old Joe Ambruster who died after a very short illness Feb. 24th, of this year, at the age of 91.

Most likely many of you members have read his thrilling tale about his high wheel bike trip, back in 1889, going from St. Louis, Mo., the town where he was born on Feb. 13, 1867, to Denver, Colorado. That was a distance over roads seldom found in this day and age, just about 1,000 miles. For details I refer you to the Roundups of May and June, 1954.

For a number of years we corresponded together and I found Joe a very fine fellow indeed. I sure miss his cheery letters. But like all humans, rich or poor, when it's time—well then—it's time.

A brief outline of Joe's very active life was sent to me by his son who was good enough to supply the various details.

He worked for a while in Denver at the Windsor Hotel, worked in a gold mine near Leadville, punched cattle for a year in North Dakota. Finally landed in the railroad business where he worked himself up on the Denver and Rio Grande. In 1908, ever the rover boy, he went east working for the Lehigh Valley Railroad as district passenger agent.

Back to Chicago in 1910 as chief clerk and general manager for the Chicago and Western.

Joe finally retired in 1932 having done his bit, and well too. His folks in Wisconsin wanted him to live with them, but Joe was too fond of activity, and in Wisconsin where they lived it was entirely too quiet.

So at 91 he really had few regrets to leave behind having lived a good clean healthy active life, not many of us can boast of such a span, as our Reckless Ralph so nicely puts it—
"he never misses,

"God be with him—ALWAYS."

—Charlie Duprez

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings
Fisherville, Mass.

Lou Kohrt of 3749 Robinhood St., Houston 5, Texas, extends an invitation to any member visiting down that way to stop in for a chat and look at old timers. Bring some trades with you, he advises.

Since L. D. Webster had an operation on his eyes, he says he feels much better, but he can't do too much reading with them as yet. Cataracts are no fun to have, always something when a person gets above 60. P. J. Moran had a time of it a year ago, also Mrs. Irene M. Chainey of Alderson, Va., a member of H. H. Bro. and the daughter of the late Mrs. Alex McVeigh Miller, an old time author of love stories.

Lots of sickness going the rounds: Bob Smeltzer, Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Smart and many others—I haven't felt any too hot either.

Old Story Papers

#5

BOYS OF NEW YORK

by William B. Burns

(continued from last issue)

My parents never objected to my reading dime novels or story papers. However, the James Boys tales were frowned upon, more or less, and to avoid arguments about them, I kept all my copies of tales about them hid in the barn or the woodshed, and never dared read them before my parents. That way I got along fine and read them whenever any of them came my way.

I have complete in my files a lot of comic stories, but lack of space forbids me naming them all. So I will list only a very few of them that were high favorites of mine in my youth: #724 "The Deacon's Boy; or, The Worst in Town," #774 "Young Dick Plunket; or, The Trials and Tribulations of Ebenezer Crow," #858 "The Shortys Doing Europe; or, On a Grand Tour for Fun," #880 "Cousin Harry; or, An English Boy in America," #925 "Aunt Maria; or, She Thought She Knew It All," #941 "Muldoon in Chicago; or, The Solid Man at the World's Fair," #982 "Our Willie; or, The Last of the Fitz-Herberts."

These comic stories seemed to have priority over the non-comic tales. They usually, but not always, started with a "smash" full page illustration on page 1. They often ran to 20 or more instalments, and an illustration to every instalment. So they contained more illustrations, as a rule, than any other type of story, in Boys of New York. It looked as if Tousey depended a lot on his comic stories.

Boys of New York contained quite a number of "off the trail" stories. Tales of forgotten races living in deep valleys that were considered impossible to find an entrance to, subterranean rivers, underground caves full of gold and jewels, ghost stories, life on other planets, etc. Tales that are known today as "fantastic."

Here's a few that are in my files:

#731 "Two Boys Trip to an Unknown Planet," by Albert J. Booth, #738 "Lost in the Great Basin; or, The Wonderful Underground City," by Kit Clyde, #748 "Where? or, Washed into an Unknown World," by Robert Maynard, #775 "We," by Robert Maynard, #776 "Buried 5,000 Years; or, The Treasure of the Aztecs," #810 "The Palace of Gold; or, The Secret of a Los Race," by C. Little, #824 "Jack and I; or, The Secret of King Pharaoh's Caves," by Robert Maynard, #847 "The Lost City of the Andes; or, The Treasure of the Volcano," by C. Little, #861 "3,000 Miles Through the Clouds; or, Dropped Among an Unknown Race," #883 "The Haunted House on the Harlem; or, The Mystery of a Missing Man," by R. T. Emmet, #910 "Simon the Sailor; or, The Search for the Sunken Continent," by Robert Maynard, #954, "3"; or, The Ten Treasure Houses of the Tartar King," by Robert Maynard, #956 "Seven Diamond Skulls; or, The Secret City of Siam," by James D. Montague, #980 "Nozoma; or, Lost Among the Head Hunters," by Robert Maynard.

I always liked stories of foreign countries with a historical background. Here's what I have in that line. #747 "Shamus O'Brien; or, The Bold Boy of Glingall," by Corporal Morgan Rattler, #757 "Sixteen Years in Siberia; or, Two Thousand Miles in Search of a Name," by Paul Bradon, #762 "Fifty Riders in Black; or, The Ravens of Raven Forest," by R. T. Emmet #780 "Young King Kerry, the Irish Rob Roy; or, The Lost Lily of Killarney," by Corporal Morgan Rattler, #786 "The Dead Duelist; or, The Little Hero of the Elba," by R. T. Emmet, #790 "Conrad, the Cosack; or, The Young Hero of the Blue Danube," by Allan Draper. #805 "Twenty Gray Wolves; or, Fighting a Crafty King," by R. T. Emmet, #826, "The Three Dauntless Young Guardsmen; or, The Chosen Champions of the Queen," by R. T. Emmet. #835 "Bold Roy O'More; or, The Wild Crows of Castlebar," by Corp. Morgan Rattler, #869 "The Seven Tigers of the Mountain; or, All for Love and

Glory," by Corp. Morgan Rattler, 891 "The Chosen Six; or, The Boy Student Nihilists," by P. T. Raymond, #972 "The Blue Mask; or, Fighting Against the Czar," by C. Little.

I did not intend to mention any school stories, but here's one out of the ordinary. It is #977, "Champion Jim Corbetts School Days; or, An American Boy With American Grit," by P. T. Raymond.

I did not intend to list any sea stories, but here's one that is more or less a sea story. It is #444-527 a very very long story, titled "Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere" by Gaston Garne. This story originally appeared (I think) in Fox's Boys Standard, and the real author, I believe is E. Harcourt Burrage. However, in reprinting it Tousey used the name Garne as author. A pen-name without doubt.

In #779 appeared "Handsome Harveys Vendetta; or, The Cruise of the Meteor," also by Garne, ended in #794 (a sequel to Handsome Harry.)

There must have been a big demand for Tousey to reprint "Handsome Harry" once more, as in #991 it started again. This time running to 173 chapters and ending in #57 of Happy Days.

On page 4 of #1000 Boys of New York we note the following announcement:

"This is the last number of Boys of New York. Hereafter this paper will be entitled Happy Days. All the good features of Boys of New York will be retained and new ones added in Happy Days. All the authors who have written for Boys of New York will write, exclusively for Happy Days."

So there you have it, probably in Tousey's own words. And so ended one of the finest boys story papers of all time. The last issue of Boys of New York was dated Oct. 13, 1894.

For lack of space, I am unable to list any of the many fine tales about school life, sea and pirate stories, western stories, Indian stories, war stories, fireman stories, railroad stories, newsboy-bootblack stories, temperance stories, Arctic and Antarctic

stories, Wall Street stories, etc. My run of the last 285 issues is really the "cream of the crop," as it contains all the Jack Wright and James Boys stories that appeared in Boys of New York, and also all the Old King Brady stories with three exceptions.

Incidentally, the five stories that did not end in Boys of New York #1000, and continued in Happy Days, were "Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere," by Gaston Garne, "Jack Mosby, the Guerilla King; or, Riding and Raiding in the War of the Rebellion," by Col. Ralph Fenton, "On the Night of the 9th; or, Old King Brady and the Man Who Was Never Seen," (a James Boys story) by A New York Detective, "Shiner, the New York Bootblack; or, The Secret of a Boys Life," by N. S. Wood and "Lost at the Pole; or, The Secret of the Arctic Circle" by Albert J. Booth.

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Box 985

Lawrence, Mass.

(Wanted: London Journal Vols. 28, 30, 50, 77. New Series Vol. 1)

CORRECTION: Due to a printing error in the April issue of the Roundup. Volume 26 of Saturday Night was listed at \$1.00. It should have been \$10.00.